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Children's Books for Fall

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Foreign-Language Books for Children • Index to June Forecasts

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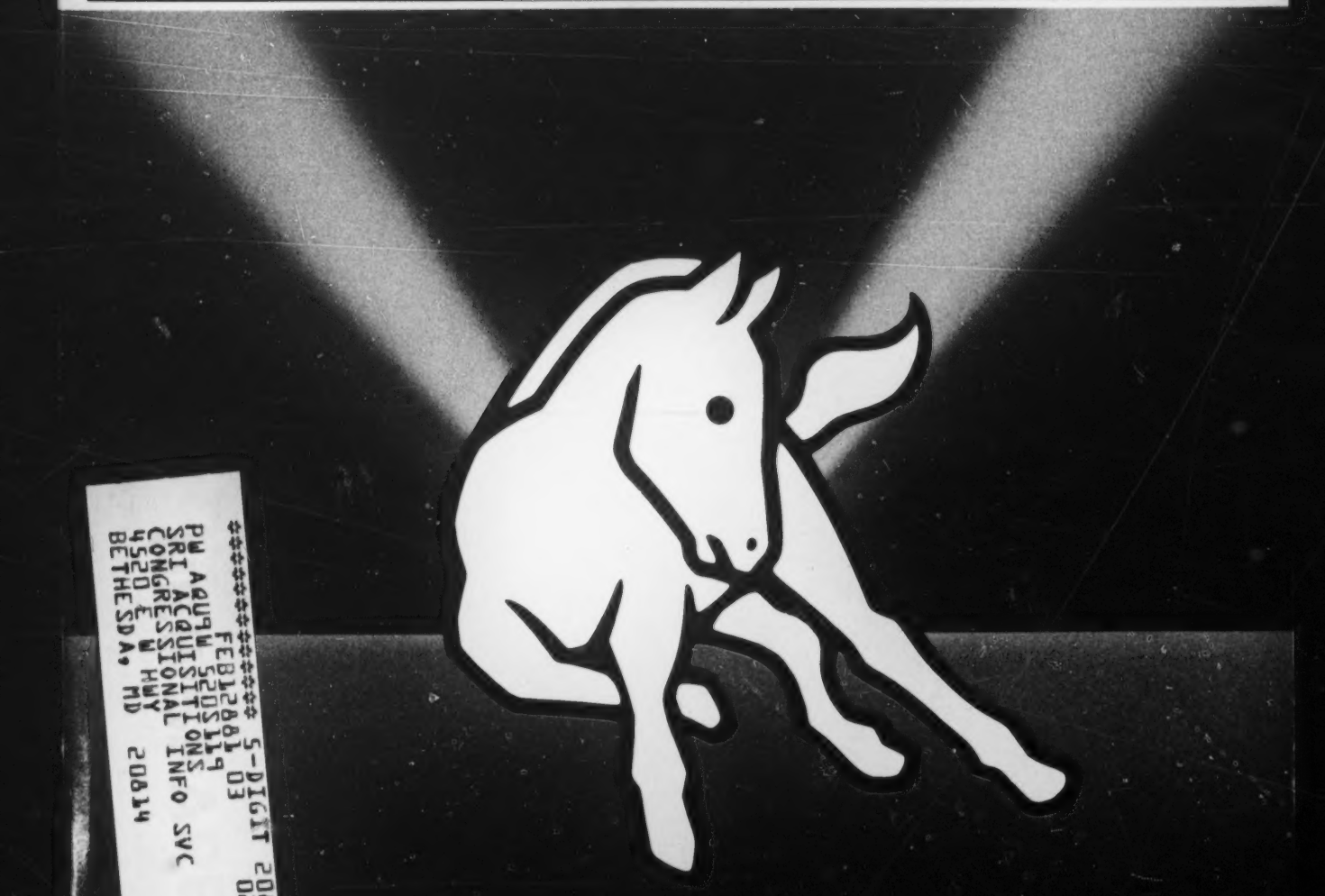

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AAP Sales Report for May

Category	% change, May	% change, YTD
Adult hardcover	13.2	14.1
Adult paperback	4.4	19.7
Juvenile hardcover	22.0	20.0
Juvenile paperback	-1.6	19.7
Univ. pr. hardcover	19.4	8.5
Univ. pr. paperback	38.3	25.0
Bibles, etc.	15.8	7.0
Mass market paperback	15.9	0.2
Book club	9.4	11.8
Mail order	0.8	1.4
Sci-tech	3.3	12.9
College texts	18.7	6.6
School texts	-9.1	-1.1

"Although some publishers have asked to acquire British and translation rights at the same time they acquire U.S. rights, agents feel that we can usually do a better job. A publisher may offer $30,000–$40,000 for U.S. and Canadian rights and then offer perhaps $50,000 for world rights. That's why we prefer to hold onto the rights."

Borchardt felt that there are great opportunities in the international marketplace. American books are greatly in demand abroad—with the exception of the U.K., he said. He singled out Italy, France, Germany and Spain, adding, "we have even sold rights recently to the U.S.S.R."

Borchardt foresees trouble ahead in the one market U.S. publishers already have tapped into—Canada—if U.S. publishers don't begin sublicensing Canadian publication rights to Canadian publishers, instead of relying on distribution arrangements.

International Selling

Robert Hyde, director of international publishing for Little, Brown, predicted growing sales opportunities in a world English-language market, since, he said, this is the area where publishing mergers will have the greatest impact.

It will be important, he continued, to own the means of local distribution in every significant market, to sell products in a fashion unique to each market segment and to take full profits—or losses—on the books rather than offsetting the risk by a licensing arrangement.

Hyde sees agents selling more world rights because conglomerates are not going to invest heavily in a book on one side of the Atlantic only to see rights sold to a rival on the other side. He also sees major authors going to multinationals and the midlist authors going to smaller houses, where they will receive more attention. This latter trend is already in evidence, he said.

Paul Feffer, chairman of Feffer & Simons, on the other hand, said that marketing the same book to countries that share a common language but have different cultures is a risky undertaking. Selling the same edition in various languages is even more perilous. Independent companies targeted to particular nations do better at this than conglomerates, he said.

He predicted that wholesalers will become increasingly important because small booksellers can't afford the inventory and expenses of a chain. Future bestsellers, Feffer said, will be the result of a lot of independent bookstores selling a few copies each.

—DAISY MARYLES AND ELLEN MANGIN

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